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Chapter Seven: The Shi'a concept of Taqiyyah

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Nasibi website stated:

> *One other Imami Shi'a doctrine that must be related is the doctrine of Taqiyyah, or dissimulation, (i.e. calculated deception). In support of this doctrine of deception, the Shi'a attribute the following to Abu Abdullah (Ja'far as-Sadiq): "Nine tenths of religion is Taqiyyah (dissimulation), hence one who does not dissimulate has no religion." (Al-Kafi vol.9 p.110) "He who conceals his religion has saved it, and he who makes it public has destroyed it." "A believer who does not dissimulate is like a body without a head." (Tafseer al-Askari) "Mix with them (i.e. non-Shi'a) externally but oppose them internally." (Al-Kafi vol.9 p.116)*

The 'actual' definition of Taqiyyah

Taqiyyah means **'concealing one's religion or faith due to fear, but in one's heart, the person must believe in the religion s/he is concealing'.** In other words it is a form of self-defence that encompasses defending one's life, property, esteem and beliefs. According to Shariah, if a person is caught up between two hardships and one of them is intolerable, then to save one's self from the bigger hardship, one should tolerate the smaller one. Therefore, Imam of Ahl'ul Sunnah Allamah Fakhruddin Razi wrote

When faced with two hardships, one should go through the smaller one to save one's self from the bigger one. This is a recognized fact.
Tafseer Kabeer, Volume 5, Page 746-750, published Istanbul

Similarly, Fakhruddin Razi has recorded the statement of Imam Hasan Basri and the advance his own comments on it:

"Taqiyyah is permissible until the day of Qayamah and this statement is better because it is Wajib to protect our life from any harm"

If speaking the truth can cause a man to loose his life, property or esteem, then it is a natural instinct that he seek to protect those things, one can, and in some cases, one has to refrain from stating the truth. Islam claims to be the religion of nature, one that in times of desperate need allows its adherent to even eat the meat of dead animal or

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Chapter Seven: The Shi'a concept of Taqiyyah

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He hath only forbidden you dead meat and blood and the flesh of swine and that on which any other name hath been invoked besides that of Allah but if one is forced by necessity without wilful disobedience nor transgressing due limits then is he guiltless. For Allah is Oft-Forgiving Most Merciful.
Surah Al Baqara, Ayah 173; transliteration of Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Taqiyyah proven from the Qur'an

It is an irrefutable fact that the use of Taqiyyah can be proved from both Qur'an and the sayings of Prophet Mohammed (S). All the prophets (A.S), the Imams (A.S) and others pious people have advised to perform Taqiyyah. Following are 'some' Ayahs from Qur'an to prove our case:

First verse

Anyone who after accepting faith in Allah utters unbelief except under compulsion his heart remaining firm in faith but such as open their breast to unbelief on them is Wrath from Allah and theirs will be a dreadful Penalty"
Surah An-Nahal, verse 106 transliteration by Abdullah Yusuf Ali

All Muslim scholars agree that this verse descended in relation to the suffering of Ammar bin Yasir (ra). Allamah Jalaladeen Suyuti in his commentary of this verse states:

The non-believers once caught Ammar bin Yasir (ra) and they forced him to say praise their false gods and to condemn Prophet Muhammad (s). They forced him to an extent that Ammar bin Yasir (ra) gave in an exceeded to their demands. After that, when he returned to the Prophet Mohammed (s), Ammar (A.S) narrated the whole story to him (s). Prophet Muhammad (S) asked him, how do you feel in your heart? To which Ammar (A.S) replied, I am fully content with Allah's religion in my heart. To this Prophet Mohammed (S) said, if non-believers ask you to say the same again, say it. At which time the following ayah was descended.

Anyone who after accepting faith in Allah utters disbelief (save under compulsion and even then his heart remains firm in faith) on them is Wrath from Allah and theirs will be a dreadful Penalty"
Tafseer Durre Manthur Volume 4 page 132, Cairo edition)

Allamah Khazin in Libab ul Taweel, Volume 3, Page 136 (published in Egypt) while writing a commentary about this ayah, after giving the traditions regarding Ammar (A.S), wrote:

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"This verse is directed to anyone who has been forced to denounce Islam, but is content with Islam in his heart, even if the reason behind this is out of the ordinary."

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Regarding this verse, Imam of Ahl ul Sunnah Allamah Abu Hussein Firah Al baghwi commented:

"All scholars of the Muslim Ummah agree on the fact that at times when one is forced, one can denounce Islam."
Tafseer Mu'alim al Tnazeel, Volume 2, Page 214, Published Bombay

Second verse

Let not the believers take for friends or helpers Unbelievers rather than believers: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah: except by way of precaution, that ye may Guard yourselves from them. But Allah cautions you (To remember) Himself; for the final goal is to Allah.
Surah Al- Imran, verse 28 transliteration of Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Imam Bukhari records in his Sahih:

"'Except by way of precaution, that ye may Guard yourselves from them (3:28)' and this is Taqqiyah"

Imam Ibn Hajar Asqalani in his commentary of the above cited text of Sahih Bukhari records:

"Taqata and Taqqiyah are the same thing…the meaning of this verse is that no believer shall befriend an unbeliever either internally or externally except in Taqqiyah externally. It is permitted to befriend him if he is afraid of them but he must keep enmity from them internally"

In fact in Tafsir Dur al-Manthur, Volume 2 page 176 we read that the early Sunni scholars used to read the word 'Taqata' as 'Taqiyyah' in this verse:

Abed bin Hamid narrated that Abi Raja used to recite "ELA AN TATAQU MENHUM TAQYYIAH"

Allamah Fakhruddin Razi had commented on this verse:

Undoubtedly, there is no harm in practicing Taqiyyah if a believer is caught up between non-believers and his life or property is under threat from them. In such circumstances he should conceal his enmity from them. Infact, he should talk in such a manner that his words should show passion. His hear should not confirm what he is saying. Taqiyyah does not have an effect on one's heart; it only has an

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external effect.
Tafseer Kabeer, Volume 2 page 626, Published Istanbul
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So we have the word of Allah, and the confirmation of the Sunni Ulema that these verses endorse the use of Taqiyyah to protect ones life. And yet the Minhajj cult are seeking to define Taqiyyah as calculated deception that contradicts the Qur'an. Whose word shall we rely those of this Nasibi group or the verdict of Allah (swt)?

People adopted Taqiyyah during the reign of the Banu Ummayya

Imam of Ahl ul Sunnah Allamah Dhahabi states:

"When Waleed ibn Abdul Malik bin Marwan came to power he entered the Mosque of the Prophet in Madina and saw an elderly man surrounded by people. Upon enquiry he discovered that the man was Saeed bin Musayyib. Waleed summoned Saeed but he did not go to him. This led to Waleed becoming furious. Amro bin Athim commented that during this time people practiced Taqiyyah and a few individuals in order to save Saeed bin Musayyib approached Waleed and pleaded with him, eventually Waleed abandoned his idea to kill Saeed"
Sira Alam al Nubla, Volume 4 page 227

It is clear from this tradition that during the Nasibi reign of the Banu Ummayya people adopted Taqiyyah to protect themselves. Allamah Dhahabi confirms this fact, and yet the Minhajj al Nasibi either through their ignore or lies have sought to define this lawful practice as 'calculated deception'.

Nasibi website stated:

> *"He who conceals his religion has saved it, and he who makes it public has destroyed it."*

Note that the Minhajj had failed to even cite the source of this narration! What we know is that the Imam's comments on 'Taqiyyah' were said in answer to queries at a time when people were being oppressed. One needs to recognise that during the reign of the Banu Ummayya throughout their vast domain, Imam 'Ali (as) was openly cursed on the mosque pulpits. The Imams (as Imam Ali's direct descendants) and their adherents were likewise deemed the enemy of the State. What choice were the people left with? It was in such a situation that the Imams made clear comments endorsing Taqiyyah as legitimate, for to convey one's belief openly would have lead to serious consequences.

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To prove our point we shall cite a tradition from Usul al Kafi:

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An individual by the name of Muammar bin Khalid asked Imam Abul Hasan (as) how to respond to oppressive rulers? He replied our descendent Imam Muhammad Baqir stated that 'Taqiyyah is the religion of our forefathers. Whoever does not practice Taqiyyah has no Deen".

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Now, we would ask Minhajj al Nasibi – Your own esteemed scholar Dhahabi had cited the episode involving Saeed bin Masayyib, and stated that during that time the people 'practiced Taqiyyah' – clearly these people must have learnt this practice from the Deen of their forefathers, they must have adopted this practice based on someone's guidance. Why did these people with true faith respond to Waleed and the other Nasibi Banu Ummayya Khalifas by adopting Taqiyyah? Why did they not initiate jihad against them? Were all these individuals Shi'a? This incident demonstrates that Taqiyyah was being practised in Madina. Was this a calculated deception? Clearly not, these individuals were hiding their faith to protect their lives, in the same way that the Imams had advocated Taqiyyah as a way of protecting one's deen.

Nasibi website stated:

> *"Nine tenths of religion is Taqiyyah (dissimulation), hence one who does not dissimulate has no religion." (Al-Kafi vol.9 p.110)*

This hadith also needs to be explained in terms of the context in which it was said. Islam had come as the all-encompassing Deen that would rule over the people, and thus ensure that they lived safe lives under the Sharia. But the situation at that time was so serious that tyrannical rulers were at the helm of the State, they dictated what the State religion was, and they had changed the entire face of the Deen. Religion had been turned on its head, and had in effect become unrecognisable, and to prove this we have the testimony of the Sahabi Malik bin Anas in Sahih al Bukhari Volume 1 hadith number 507:

"Anas said, "I do not find (now-a-days) things as they were (practiced) at the time of the Prophet." Somebody said "The prayer (is as it was.)" Anas said, "Have you not done in the prayer what you have done?"

Narrated Az-Zuhri that he visited Anas bin Malik at Damascus and found him weeping and asked him why he was weeping. He replied, "I do not know anything which I used to know during the lifetime of Allah's Apostle except this prayer which is being lost (not offered as it should be)".

This well known Sahabi was testifying that the practices during the time of Rasulullah (s) had been completely lost, save Salat that was also now being changed. The

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question that we pose is, 'what were the Sahaba doing at this time?' Were they either endorsing these practices or had they simply gone underground and hidden their beliefs in their hearts. Clearly they must have also been practicing Taqiyyah. When the Imam (as) had declared that 9/10th of the Deen was Taqiyyah, it was because 9/10th of Deen that was being propagated by the State was NOT the Deen of Allah (swt), as had been vouched for by Malik – hence the actual 9/10th was hidden in one's hearts it was Taqiyyah. Anyone who did NOT practise Taqiyyah and had infact embraced the State practices was NOT following the Deen of Allah (swt) i.e., **"one who does not dissimulate has no religion."**

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Nasibi website stated:

> *"Mix with them (i.e. non-Shi'a) externally but oppose them internally." (Al-Kafi vol.9 p.116)*

Perhaps these Nasibis could answer us this, if you live in country where the vast bulk of the people are non Muslim, and where very few adherents of your thinking live near you – worse still you are surrounded by those hostile to you, what is the best option for an individual to pursue? This problem is particularly acute in this day and age, indeed since September the 11th 2001, where Muslims living in the West are being deemed 'the enemy' – and are frowned upon by 'others' as terrorists / extremists / fanatics. The hatred vented against Muslims has lead to many going in to hiding fearing verbal and physical abuse. So Minhajj al Nasibi in such circumstances what is a Muslim to do?

To understand the comment of the Imam Sadiq (as) here let us cite the words of famed companion Abu Dardah recorded by Imam Bukhari in his Sahih:

It has been mentioned that Abu Darda said: "We give a smile for some people while our hearts curse them"
Sahih Bukhari [English], Volume 3 page 95

Then we also have the following Hadith in Sahih Bukhari Volume 8, Book 73, Number 80:

Narrated 'Aisha:
A man asked permission to enter upon Allah's Apostle. The Prophet said, "Admit him. What an evil brother of his people or a son of his people." But when the man entered, the Prophet spoke to him in a very polite manner. (And when that person left) I said, "O Allah's Apostle! You had said what you had said, yet you spoke to him in a very polite manner?" The Prophet said, "O 'Aisha! The worst people are those whom the people desert or leave in order to save themselves from their dirty language or from their transgression."

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Also see Sahih Bukhari Volume 8, Book 73, Number 152.

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NOTE: The meaning here is that one is permitted to use diplomacy to get along with people. The above tradition was narrated when a person-sought permission to see the Holy Prophet (s) and prior to his asking permission the Prophet (s) said that he was not a good man, but still I shall see him. The Prophet talked to the person with utmost respect, upon which A'isha inquired as to why did the Prophet (s) talk to the person with respect despite his character, upon which the above reply was rendered.

Now look at these two hadith and tell us, what is the objection with the words of Imam Jafer Sadiq (as)? What is the difference between the hadith of Rasulullah (s) and the words of Imam Jafer Sadiq (as)?

Abdullah Ibn Umar practised Taqiyyah in the presence of Mu'awiya

We read in Sahih al Bukhari (English translation) Volume 4 hadith number 434 that:

Ibn 'Umar said, "I went to Hafsa while water was dribbling from her twined braids. I said, 'The condition of the people is as you see, and no authority has been given to me.' Hafsa said, (to me), 'Go to them, and as they (i.e. the people) are waiting for you, and I am afraid your absence from them will produce division amongst them.' " So Hafsa did not leave Ibn 'Umar till we went to them. When the people differed, Mu'awiya addressed the people saying, "If anybody wants to say anything in this matter of the Caliphate, he should show up and not conceal himself, for we are more rightful to be a Caliph than he and his father." On that, Habib bin Masalama said (to Ibn 'Umar), "Why don't you reply to him (i.e. Mu'awiya)?" 'Abdullah bin 'Umar said, "I untied my garment that was going round my back and legs while I was sitting and was about to say, 'He who fought against you and against your father for the sake of Islam, is more rightful to be a Caliph,' but I was afraid that my statement might produce differences amongst the people and cause bloodshed, and my statement might be interpreted not as I intended. (So I kept quiet) remembering what Allah has prepared in the Gardens of Paradise (for those who are patient and prefer the Hereafter to this worldly life)." Habib said, "You did what kept you safe and secure (i.e. you were wise in doing so)."

So we see here:

1. Mu'awiya proclaimed his superiority to the Khilafath.
2. Ibn Umar disagreed and wished to highlight the truth openly before the people.
3. Ibn Umar chose not to challenge the claim as he was **"afraid that my statement might produce differences amongst the people and cause**

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bloodshed

4. Habib commented to Ibn Umar **"You did what kept you safe and secure (i.e. you were wise in doing so)."**

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Ibn Umar's silence to prevent bloodshed and Habib's confirmation that he had adopted this stance to protect himself is clear proof that Ibn Umar was practicing Taqiyyah. Would Minhajj also deem this to be 'calculated deception' on the part of this Sahaba or was he practising Taqiyyah in order to save his life and the lives of others? What is there fatwa here?

Hanafi Fatwa, at the time of danger, one can swear at Rasulullah (s) – (naudobillah)

One should point out that the Deobandis very own aqeedah is that when one is being threatened, he can swear at Rasulullah (s) (naudobillah), we cite a text that is still read as part of the curriculum in Deobandi Madrassas Usul al-Shashi, Chapter "Al Dheema" page 114:

"It is permissible to swear at Rasulullah (s) when one is under duress and to recite the Kalima of Kufr in the fear of loosing property or of getting murdered provided that the heart is at comfort."

We should also point out that Sunni scholar Abu Shakoor Saalmi in al-Tamheed fi Bayan al-Tauwheed, Chapter 1 pages 18 & 19 (Delhi) states:

"Similarly, Kufr is the worst act. But when one is forced to commit it through a threat of murder then it is permissible to adopt Taqiyyah and recite the Kalima of kufr; and such a person should NOT be deemed a Kaffir. Verily, the Shari'a has deemed it a favorable act to recite Kalima of Kufr under Taqqiyah".

Why were the majority silent when Ali was cursed?

Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri in his work Faiz al Bari Sharah Sahih Bukhari, Volume 1 page 722 No. 954, Kitab al-Eidayn, highlights the following fact:

"The sunnah is to perform prayer before the sermon, but Marwan made it (sermon) before the prayer because he used to abuse Ali (may Allah be pleased with him)"

From history we learn that the sole individual that objected to this alteration was Abu Said al Khudri, and he spoke out against this change openly. This was a time when many of the Sahaba were still alive. No doubt they would have been fully aware that the Sunnah had been changed, so why did they remain silent on the matter? Tell us

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Minhajj 'When the rightly guided khalifa 'Ali (as) was being cursed from the Mosque pulpits (including the Mosque of the Prophet (s) in Madina) on the Day of Eid, and the State had made him the target of vilification, why did the majority remain silent?' There can only be two reasons:

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Either:

The majority (that comprised of the Sahaba and Tabayeen) considered the cursing of Ali (as) to be a virtuous act, if this is the case then we challenge Minhajj to pass their verdict on the majority at that time.

Or:

These individuals remained silent in the face of the tyrannical Banu Ummayya Nasibi rulers, and knew that speaking out would result in them losing their lives. They were therefore left with no other choice but to adopt Taqiyyah and remain silent. Clearly this option is the better one to accept, particularly for Minhajj, if there intention is to protect the status of Sahaba and other Muslims of that time.

Sunni scholar Umar bin Bahr Jahiz accepted this option writing in "al Bayan wa'l Tabayeen" page 29:

"And these are the people who lowered their eyes due to fear of the next world, there was a fear of the time [they lived in] amongst them were those who had become dispersed and divided. Some were on their own living in fear, some were in waiting, offering prayers. They were a sorrowful people, they were lost in Taqiyyah".

The Imams from the Ahl'ul bayt (as) were deemed a threat by the Leaders of the time. They were conscious of the need to propagate the true teachings of Islam, hence it was important that they protected their lives as well as those of their followers, they therefore took the decision to adopt Taqiyyah as a necessary response to the difficult times they lived in.

The Ulema of Ahl'ul Sunnah believe in the legitimacy of Taqiyyah

It is interesting to see that the Nasibi brand Taqiyyah deception, whilst their own aqeedah is lying i.e. deception when necessary is not only allowed, but a must. Therefore, Imam Nawawi wrote:

"All the scholars agree on the fact that if a cruel man comes to kill a person who is hiding, or comes to wrongfully take someone else's possessions, and asks for information about that (possession), then it is Wajib on everyone to conceal it

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and deny knowledge of its whereabouts. This is not only permissible but Wajib because its purpose is to protect an oppressed one from the grasp of an oppressor."

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Sharh Muslim Nawawi, Volume 2 page 106-266, published in Luknow

Due to these reasons, some scholars of Ahl'ul Sunnah have openly agreed to the logic behind Taqiyyah.

In al-Nasa'ih al-Kaafiyah page 109, (Bombay edition), Sunni scholar Muhammad bin Aqeel Shaafiyee writes:

I say our scholars (Scholars of Ahl'ul Sunnah) agree on the fact that when needed, telling a lie is allowed, and this is Taqiyyah. But if we name this Taqiyyah, a lot of the scholars raise an objection, since Shi'as use this term. So the difference between Shi'a and Sunni is only the word difference.

Shaykh Ahmed Fehmi Mesri in Hashia al-Mihal wa An-Nahal, Volume 1 page 195, published in Cairo, wrote:

"Taqiyyah is allowed at times of fear, and Tabbara said that our companions say that in times of need, Taqiyyah is allowed; rather, in some cases to create an environment of unity, it can also be used. And all the narrations which are present speak for it."

Darling of the Ahl'ul Sunnah and leading opponent of the Shi'a, al Muhaddith Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlavi, despite his anti Shi'a views testified to the legitimacy of Taqiyyah:

It should be known that Taqiyyah is permissible, proven from the Qur'an one such verse is ," Let not the believers take for friends or helpers Unbelievers rather than believers: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah: except by way of precaution, that ye may Guard yourselves from them. But Allah cautions you (To remember) Himself; for the final goal is to Allah. " and the other statement of Allah [swt]:

"He who disbelieves in Allah after his having believed, not he who is compelled while his heart is at rest on account of faith, but he who opens (his) breast to disbelief– on these is the wrath of Allah, and they shall have a grievous chastisement."

The definition of Taqiyyah is to oppose one's life, property or honor and this can be of two types. Firstly, the enmity may be based on religion of belief, like a Kaafir and Muslim. Secondly, it may be based on the worldly things, like property, place, women and other belongings. Thus, Taqqiyah is also of two kinds…"
Tauhfa Ithna Ashariyya, page 337

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The Khwaarij are the only Sect that reject Taqiyyah

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Minhajj whilst defining Taqiyyah as 'calculated deception' and rejecting its as an act of hypocrisy, should know that they have in fact exposed their 'actual' beliefs. The fact of the matter is in Islam all Sects agree that Taqiyyah is a legitimate practice except the Khwaarij.

Imam of Ahle Sunnah, Ibn Asakir discusses the beliefs of the Khwaarij in Tahdeeb Volume 4 page 147, whilst commenting on the life of Hasan bin Farokh. He states:

"The fourth characteristic of the Khwaarij is that they consider it permissible to kill their enemies women and children…the sixth characteristic of the Khwaarij is they deem advocating (verbally) and practising Taqiyyah to be unlawful".

Meer Shareef Jarjani in Sharh Mawaqif, page 757 whilst setting out the beliefs of the Khwaarij states:

"The Khwaarij consider the endorsement and practice of Taqiyyah to be a haraam act, and deem it permissible to kill their opponents."

Similarly Abdul Kareem Shahrastani in his famous text 'al Mihal wa al Nahal' Volume 1 page 122, whilst setting out the views of the Khwaarij, states:

"The sixth characteristic of the Khwaarij is that they consider the act of Taqiyyah to be unlawful either verbally or practically".

We would like to make it clear that both Shi'a and Ahl'ul Sunnah believe in the legitimacy of Taqiyyah and the only group that deny it and deem it to be 'calculated deception' are the Khwaarij and Nasibi like Minhajj al-Sunnah, who also deem shedding the blood of their opponents to be an act for which they shall be rewarded.

For comprehensive study into the topic of Taqiyyah please read our article:
Taqiyyah (Expedient dissimulation)

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